

Claim Amendments

1. (Currently Amended) A modular picket fence, comprising:
 - a. at least two spaced apart vertical posts being adaptable to be secured to a support surface;
 - b. at least two spaced apart upper and lower hollow horizontal tubular rails, each horizontal rail having ~~a plurality of spaced apart apertures,~~
5 an enclosed upper surface with a plurality of spaced apart apertures
and an enclosed lower surface with a plurality of spaced apart
apertures, a respective aperture in an upper surface aligned with a
respective aperture in a lower surface;
 - c. means for attaching said at least two horizontal rails to said at least two vertical posts such that ~~corresponding~~ the apertures on said at least two horizontal rails are aligned;
 - d. a plurality of spaced apart vertical tubular pickets having a hollow interior secured in mutually parallel relationship by to said at least two
10 horizontal rails, each said vertical picket having two opposite end portions respectively inserted into said aligned ~~corresponding~~
15 apertures of said at least two horizontal rails, each said end portion of each said vertical picket having two oppositely disposed and aligned transverse apertures each aperture having a locking tongue extending into the aperture;
 - e. means for locking said each end portion of said each vertical picket to ~~a respective~~ one of said at least two horizontal rails when said end portion is inserted into a respective aligned set of corresponding
20 ~~aperture~~ apertures of said respective one of said at least two horizontal rails, said locking means comprising a one-piece generally U-shaped
25 spring clip having a bent middle portion and two opposite end

portions each having an outwardly protruding stopper, each stopper having a ramp side having an opening which receives a corresponding locking tongue and a right-angle side, said spring clip inserted into said each end portion of said each vertical picket with said opposite stoppers of said spring clip secured to the vertical picket by means of a locking tongue received within the opening in a ramp side and each ramp side respectively protruding through said two oppositely disposed and aligned transverse apertures of each said end portion of each said vertical picket;

- f. as said each end portion of each said vertical picket is inserted into one of said corresponding aligned sets of apertures of said respective one of said horizontal rails, said stoppers of said spring clip are inserted in said each end portion of each said vertical picket and extend ~~extending~~ through said transverse apertures of said each end portion of each said vertical picket such that for the upper horizontal rail the locking tongue engages the opening in the ramp side of the stopper so that the ramp side of the stopper rests upon the interior of the lower surface and the right angle side is compressed against the interior wall of the vertical picket and for the lower horizontal rail the locking tongue engages the opening in the ramp side of the stopper so that the ramp side of the stopper rests underneath the interior of the upper surface and the right angle side is compressed against the interior wall of the vertical picket ~~and also extending into and engaging inside said respective one of said horizontal rails~~ such that vertical movement of each said vertical picket relative to said respective one of said horizontal rails is prevented.

2. (Original) The modular picket fence in accordance with Claim 1, further comprising a sealing cap for covering each spaced apart apertures of said horizontal rails after said fence is assembled.
3. (Original) The modular picket fence in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said attaching means includes bolts and nuts.
4. (Cancelled) A modular picket fence, comprising:
 - a. at least two spaced apart vertical posts being adaptable to be secured to a support surface;
 - b. at least two spaced apart horizontal tubular rails each having a plurality of spaced apart apertures;
 - c. means for attaching said at least two horizontal rails to said at least two vertical posts such that corresponding apertures on said at least two horizontal rails are aligned;
 - d. a plurality of spaced apart vertical tubular pickets secured in mutually parallel relationship by said at least two horizontal rails, each said vertical picket having two locking portions respectively inserted into said aligned corresponding apertures of said at least two horizontal rails, each said locking portion of each said vertical picket having at least two oppositely disposed and aligned transverse apertures;
 - e. means for locking said each end portion of said each vertical picket to a respective one of said at least two horizontal rails when said locking portion is inserted into a respective aligned corresponding aperture of said respective one of said at least two horizontal rails, said locking means having two spring-biased oppositely outwardly protruding stoppers, said locking means inserted into said each locking portion of said each vertical picket with said opposite stoppers respectively

protruding through said two oppositely disposed and aligned transverse apertures of each said locking portion of each said vertical picket;

- 25 f. as said each locking portion of each said vertical picket inserted into one of said corresponding apertures of one of said horizontal rails, said stoppers of said locking means inserted in said each locking portion of each said vertical picket extending through said transverse apertures of said each locking portion of each said vertical picket and
- 30 also extending into and engaging inside said one of said horizontal rails such that vertical movement of each said vertical picket relative to said one of said horizontal rails is prevented.

5. (Cancelled) The modular picket fence in accordance with Claim 4, further comprising a sealing cap for covering each spaced apart apertures of said horizontal rails after said fence is assembled.
6. (Cancelled) The modular picket fence in accordance with Claim 4, wherein said attaching means includes bolts and nuts.
7. (Cancelled) A modular picket fence, comprising:
- a. at least two spaced apart vertical posts being adaptable to be secured to a support surface;
 - b. at least one horizontal tubular rail having a plurality of spaced apart apertures;
 - c. means for attaching said at least one horizontal rail to said at least two vertical posts;
 - d. a plurality of spaced apart vertical tubular pickets secured to said at least one horizontal rail, each said vertical picket having at least one

10 locking portion inserted into a corresponding one of said apertures of
said at least one horizontal rail, said at least one locking portion of
each said vertical picket having at least one transverse aperture;
e. means for locking said at least one locking portion of said each
vertical picket to said at least one horizontal rail when said at least one
15 locking portion is inserted into said corresponding one of said
apertures of said at least one horizontal rail, said locking means
having at least one spring-biased outwardly protruding stopper, said
locking means inserted into said at least one locking portion of said
each vertical picket with said at least one stopper protruding through
20 said at least one transverse aperture of said at least one locking portion
of each said vertical picket;
f. as said at least one locking portion of each said vertical picket inserted
into one of said corresponding apertures of said at least one horizontal
rail, said at least one stopper of said locking means inserted in said
25 each at least one locking portion of each said vertical picket extending
through said at least one transverse aperture of said at least one
locking portion of each said vertical picket and also extending into
and engaging inside said at least one horizontal rail such that vertical
movement of each said vertical picket relative to said at least one
30 horizontal rail is prevented.

8. (Cancelled) The modular picket fence in accordance with Claim 7, further comprising a sealing cap for covering each spaced apart apertures of said at least one horizontal rail after said fence is assembled.
9. (Cancelled) The modular picket fence in accordance with Claim 7, wherein said attaching means includes bolts and nuts.